

CONSUMER HIGHLIGHTS

FEBRUARY 2001

CONTENTS

CONSUMER HIGHLIGHTS RENEWAL FORM
FEBRUARY CALENDAR
FCE NEWS

| | |
|--|-------|
| HEART CHECK..... | 2 |
| WASH DAZE: LAUNDRY GADGETS WON'T LIGHTEN THE LOAD..... | 3 |
| TAKING THE "BAIT" OUT OF REBATES..... | 4 |
| TOP 10 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT ESTATE PLANNING..... | 4 |
| VALENTINE FOOD FOR THOUGHT..... | 5 |
| THE ROSE: MYTHS & MEANINGS. | 5 |
| 52 FAVORITE HEALTH TIPS FOR 2001..... | 6 |
| GARDENER'S CORNER..... | 8 |
| BROCCOLI WILD RICE SOUP..... | 9 |
| SPLENDID RASPBERRY SPINACH SALAD..... | 10 |

HEART CHECK



The American Heart Association has recently published new dietary guidelines that will replace their Step 1 and Step 2 diets. The new guidelines are designed to help individuals achieve four goals, with two or three specific recommendations listed under each one. Use these as a checklist to make sure you are on track:

1) A Healthy Eating Pattern

- Consume a variety of fruits and vegetables and grain products, including whole grains.
- Include fat-free and lowfat dairy products, fish, legumes, poultry, and lean meats. *Note:* it is important to use fat-free dairy products to limit saturated fat consumption. Legumes and fish are definitely more beneficial to your heart than poultry or lean meat.

2) A Healthy Body Weight

- Prevention of weight gain is important due to its association with increased heart disease.
- If you want to lose weight, the AHA recommends a calorie reduction of 500-1000 calories per day and limiting fat to < 30%. They also suggest avoidance of a regular intake of high-sugar, nutrient-poor foods.
- Physical activity is recommended as an integral weight-management strategy, with a suggested goal of 30-60 minutes on most days of the week.

3) A Desirable Blood Cholesterol and Lipoprotein Profile

- Restriction of saturated fat to <10% of calories for the general population and <7% for those with elevated LDL cholesterol is the most important strategy. Trans fatty acids should be considered a saturated fat and restricted.
- The specific amount of total fat should be individualized according to other risk factors present.
- The benefits of omega 3 fatty acids are mentioned, including reduction in arrhythmias, lowering of triglycerides, and reduction in blood clotting. At least 2 servings of fish per week are recommended, or plant sources of omega 3s such as flax, canola and soybean oils.
- Dietary cholesterol intake should be <300 mg for the general population and <200 mg for those with elevated LDL or CVD.
- Weight loss and increased physical activity are suggested for those with low HD ("good cholesterol").
- Weight loss, increased physical activity, and limiting sugar and refined carbohydrates are suggested as dietary strategies for reducing triglycerides. Omega 3 fatty acids may also be beneficial.

4) A Desirable Blood Pressure

- The AHA guidelines support the DASH diet and emphasize fruits, vegetables and low-fat dairy products to achieve normal blood pressure.
- Moderate alcohol consumption for

those who choose to drink (maximum 1 drink for women, 2 for men), weight loss, and reducing sodium intake to less than 2400 mg or 6 grams of salt is suggested to prevent and control high blood pressure. *Note:* salt restriction is the most important.

- These lifestyle modifications should be used as initial therapy in early hypertension and as an adjunct to decrease the medication in others.

Communicating Food for Health – February 2001

WASH DAZE: Laundry Gadgets Won't Lighten the Load

Wouldn't it be great to throw out those heavy boxes and bottles of laundry detergent and replace them with a small, light-weight, money-saving plastic ball? Some businesses claim that their reusable balls, rings and discs, filled with what they say is a special liquid, can take the place of laundry detergents.

The manufacturers claim their products "change the molecular structure of water" to force dirt out of clothing. Internet ads and product distributors maintain that their laundry aids, which cost about \$75 apiece, can last for thousands of loads — and save customers hundreds of dollars in detergent costs.

Before you toss out your tried and true detergents, consider this: Tests show that these gadgets do little more than

clean out your wallet. At best, they're marginally better than washing clothes in hot water alone, and not as effective as washing them with laundry detergent. At worst, the products are completely useless.

The Real Dirt on Getting Your Laundry Clean

- **Follow the care label instructions.** Cleaning instructions are required on most textile clothing. They are not required on clothing made primarily of suede or leather, footwear, items for the head and hands — such as hats and gloves — or on household items like sheets and towels. However, many manufacturers of these items provide care information voluntarily.
- **Pre-treat stains.**
- **Sort by color.** Wash whites separately; light and medium colors together; and brights and darks by themselves.
- **Don't overload your washer.** Clothes need room to move and enough water to carry away the soil.
- **Follow product instructions.** Use the recommended amount of detergent and other laundry products, and follow the recommended procedures. Some products are added to the water before the clothes; others, like liquid fabric softener, are added at the start of the rinse cycle.

Consumer Alert
April 1999

TAKING THE "BAIT" OUT OF REBATES

Rebate offers can be irresistible to consumers, slashing the price of consumer goods at the time of purchase or promising partial or full reimbursements after the purchase.

Some manufacturers and retailers entice shoppers with instant cash rebates that can be redeemed immediately at the checkout counter.

But most rebates are of the mail-in variety. They require consumers to pay the full cost of an item at the time of purchase, then to send documentation to the manufacturer or retailer to receive a rebate by mail.

The documentation required generally includes the original sales receipt, UPC code, rebate slip, and the customer's name, address and telephone number. In most cases, this paperwork must be sent to the manufacturer or retailer within 30 days of the purchase. Consumers generally receive their rebates up to 12 weeks later.

But the Federal Trade Commission cautions consumers against being "baited" by rebates that never arrive or arrive far later than promised. By law, companies are required to send rebates within the time frame promised, or if no time is specified, within 30 days.

When purchasing a product that offers a rebate, the FTC encourages consumers to:



Follow the instructions on the rebate form and enclose all required documentation in the envelope when filing for a rebate.



Make a copy of all paperwork to be mailed when applying for a rebate. It's the only record a consumer will have of the transaction if anything goes wrong.



Contact the company if the rebate doesn't arrive within the time promised.



If the rebate never arrives or arrives late, file a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission, the state Attorney General or the local Better Business Bureau. Call the FTC's Consumer Response Center helpline toll-free at 1-877-FTC-HELP (382-4357) or write: Consumer Response Center, Federal Trade Commission, 600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20580. Consumers also may file a complaint online at **www.ftc.gov**. Click on "Complaint Form."

FTC Consumer Alert
January 2000

TOP 10 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT ESTATE PLANNING

1. No matter how much you have, it's important to learn basic estate planning techniques and to plan carefully so that your family, financial and philanthropic goals are met even after you die.

2. A good way to begin estate planning is to take inventory of your assets.

3. It's easy to overlook, but thoroughly discussing your assets and intentions with your heirs is a critical initial stage of estate planning.

4. Your taxable estate includes everything you own, including your home, investments, retirement accounts, life insurance and any share of jointly held property.

5. Estates of up to \$675,000 are exempt from federal estate taxes in 2000. This figure will rise gradually to \$1,000,000 by 2006.

6. You can leave an unlimited amount to your spouse tax-free, but this generally isn't a good tactic, as it simply defers all the tough decisions about your assets until the time of your spouse's death.

7. Everybody needs a will, or, if your estate is complicated, a living trust. Your will or living trust is the device that lets you tell the world exactly how and where you want your assets distributed when you die. Dying without one can be disastrous.

8. Irrevocable trusts are legal mechanisms that let you put conditions on how your assets will be used after you die. Trusts are extremely flexible and can be used to accomplish many goals, including sheltering assets from taxes and directing money to specific family members.

9. You can give up to \$10,000 a year to anyone you like without triggering gift taxes. This can help your beneficiaries and reduce your taxable estate while you are still alive.

10. New vehicles for giving, including charitable gift funds and community foundations, make it easy to grow investments tax-free and direct them to charities, both while you are alive and after you die.

Money 101: Estate
Planning –
January 23, 2001

VALENTINE FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Cabbage always has a heart; Green
beans string along.
You're such a cute tomato, Will you peas
to me belong?
You've been the apple of my eye, You
know how much I care;
So lettuce get together, We'd make a
perfect pear.

Now, something's sure to turnip to prove
you can't be beet;
So, if you carrot all for me let's let our
tulips meet.
Don't squash my hopes and dreams now,
Bee my honey, dear;
Or tears will fill potato's eyes, While
sweet corn lends an ear.

I'll cauliflower shop and say, Your dreams
are parsley mine.
I'll work and share my celery, So be my
valentine.

Jeanne Losey

THE ROSE: MYTHS AND MEANINGS

Roses are among the oldest of cultivated
flowers, with the first known to have

grown in Asian gardens 5,000 years ago. In its untamed form the flower goes back even further; fossils of wild roses date back 35 million years. This February 14 alone, 1-800-Flowers expects to sell at least 3 million roses. It seems the appeal of the rose has stood the test of time.

The ancients explained the beauty of the rose through myths of godly creation. The Greek goddess Chloris stumbled upon a beautiful dead nymph and turned her into a flower; Aphrodite added beauty; the three graces added brilliance, joy, and charm. Dionysius donated fragrant nectar, while Zephyrus the west wind blew away the clouds so Apollo could shower the rose in sun. The flower was then given to Eros, the deity of love, and named the "Queen of Flowers."

The Romans had their own ideas on the rose's origin. According to their legend, many suitors were lined up to marry a beautiful woman named Rodanthe, but she had little interest in any of them. These men were so full of love and desire that they became rowdy and eventually broke down the doors to her house. This episode angered the goddess Diana, who turned the woman into a flower and her suitors into thorns to teach them a lesson.

Whatever its origin, the rose is undeniably the best-known symbol of beauty and love. It is common knowledge that red roses mean **I love you**. A dozen of them makes the ultimate statement on Valentine's Day, a tradition surely developed by those who measure value by quantity rather than quality.

Lesser-known nuances of meaning are attached to different colors and types of roses. If you're going to jump on the bandwagon and shell out the cash for your valentine, you'd better get the definitions straight. Red and white together mean **unity**, pink means **grace** and **gentility**, and yellow symbolizes **joy**. If you want to stir things up on February 14, send orange or coral roses to speak your **desire**. Burgundy will compliment your sweetheart's **unconscious beauty** (great to accompany a glass of red wine, not several bottles). Sweetheart roses are for couples who like nicknames, as they mean **darling**, **dear**, or **honey**, but if you call each other "babycakes," they should still do the trick. A single rose signifies **simplicity**, a nice statement to make if your pockets are empty. And don't confuse white roses with white rosebuds; the first means **you're heavenly**, while the second warns that **you're too young for love**.

HomeArts.com – 1/23/01

52 FAVORITE HEALTH TIPS FOR 2001

Ready to get the new year off to a healthy start? The editors of EN offer some of their favorite ideas to take you through 2001, one week at a time.

- March

1. Make a habit of filling two-thirds of your plate with vegetables, beans and whole grains and only one-third with lean meat, poultry, fish or eggs.
2. Enjoy oatmeal more by adding nuts, raisins, cut-up apples plus a scoop of soy protein or skim milk powder.

3. Switch from whole milk to 2% to 1%, even ½ % (concoct yourself) to ease the journey to skim ("fat-free").
4. Combine whole wheat spaghetti or brown rice 1:3 with regular spaghetti or rice, gradually increasing the proportion to a goal of all whole grain.
5. Wash hands frequently.
6. Try creamy tasting ultra-pasteurized skim milk in coffee.
7. For variety and fiber, combine cereals like shredded wheat with flax flakes or bran flakes with corn flakes.
8. Do body stretches while waiting for food to microwave.
9. Instead of meat, add canned white beans (cannellini) to soups and stews.
10. Chew gum while baking and cooking to keep from sneaking a taste.
11. Spread soynut butter over a whole wheat waffle and top with a drizzle of real maple syrup.
12. Sprinkle a little grated Parmesan cheese over veggies or popcorn for flavor without a lot of fat.
13. Date all refrigerated leftovers; use within three to four days.

June

14. Make cream soups with ultra-pasteurized skim milk.
15. Add grated zucchini, mushrooms or mashed beans to pasta sauce.
16. Keep ready-to-eat veggies, fruit and low-fat yogurt in the front of the fridge; hide less nutritious treats in the back.
17. Park your car or get off the bus a few blocks from your destination.
18. Eat heart-healthy fish (especially salmon, sardines, tuna) twice a week.

19. Toss a handful of sunflower seeds, walnuts and raisins into vanilla yogurt for a quick, healthful lunch.
20. Buy a vegetarian cookbook. Try a new recipe once a week.
21. Use firm tofu in place of meat in stir-fries, chili and casseroles.
22. Keep a can of mandarin oranges (packed in juice or light syrup) in the refrigerator for a low-cal sweet snack.
23. Walk around when talking on your cordless phone.
24. Drink calcium-fortified juice.
25. Choose a low-fat yogurt with a variety of live and active cultures (e.g. Stonyfield Farm).
26. Wear a pedometer to monitor your daily steps. Aim for 10,000 a day.

September

27. When traveling, pack baby carrots, broccoli, nuts and grapes for munchies.
28. Take an aisle seat on airplanes, so you can easily get up and walk around.
29. Wash all produce (even the skin of melons) before slicing and eating.
30. Freeze grapes or a banana on a stick for a cool treat.
31. Refrigerate a half-gallon container with water each morning. Aim to finish it by day's end.
32. Keep your mind active by solving crossword puzzles or learning new computer skills.
33. Make tuna salad with nonfat plain yogurt and low-fat mayo. Add chopped grapes or mandarin oranges.
34. Instead of a soft drink, mix equal parts orange juice and seltzer.
35. Take brisk walks or jogs when on vacation, while looking for interesting sites to explore.

36. Buy a fruit or vegetable you've never eaten before.

37. Read labels. Look for 100% juice and 100% whole-grain bread.

38. Mix wheat germ into yogurt, cereal or cut-up fruit.

39. If you can't brush, swish your mouth out with water or chew sugarless gum.

- December

40. Order pizza light on cheese and heavy with veggies.

41. Add nuts to stir fries, salads, cooked rice and cereal.

42. Spread peanut butter or hummus on a whole wheat bagel for breakfast.

43. Add omega-3-rich flaxseed meal to pancake mix. Substitute for $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of flour in quick bread batters.

44. When making meatballs or meat sauce, use $\frac{1}{2}$ lean ground beef and $\frac{1}{2}$ soy crumbles.

45. Roast a head of garlic. Spread it on whole grain toast or in mashed potatoes.

46. Add a spoonful of skim milk powder to eggs, soups, mashed potatoes or coffee to thicken and enrich.

47. For a chocolate fix, make chocolate pudding with skim milk or sip hot chocolate made with skim milk.

48. When time is tight, think in 10's. Take a 10-minute walk or a 10-minute stationary bike ride.

49. Take a bone formula that contains isoflavone (synthetic isoflavone).

50. Make party dips with low-fat yogurt or reduced-fat sour cream.

51. Instead of chips with dip, serve crudité's and whole wheat pita wedges.

52. At holiday parties, hold a low-cal beverage in your hand—you won't have room for a plate of food.

Environmental Nutrition
January 2001

GARDENER'S CORNER

Most conversations with gardeners these days are related to our winter weather. There is great concern about the unusually long cold periods this year and their effects on landscape plants.



Though many tropical and subtropical ornamentals have suffered to varying degrees, things aren't as bad as they seem. Many will likely make full recovery during the spring and summer. As long as there are any live buds at the base of these plants, they can come back quickly.

Be patient when warm weather returns. Give plants until May to show signs of life before replacing them.

New Master Gardener Class Begins

The class of 2001 began on January 24 with twenty new students. They will attend 50 hours of lectures, workshops and field trips and, come April, will be ready for volunteer service.

The compilation of M.G. activities required for our annual report to the University revealed some interesting information about the program:

| | |
|---|----|
|  Number of active volunteers | 82 |
|  Number of projects | 32 |

🌱 Number of hours (2000)
2,242

February Tips

🌱 In the vegetable garden, plant seeds of beets, carrots, kohlrabi, mustard, parsley, English peas, radish and turnips. Plant seed pieces of Irish potatoes. Set out transplants of broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, Chinese cabbage, endive, escarole, kale, leek, lettuce, bunching and multiplying onions. It's too late for transplanting bulbing onions.

🌱 Some garden centers have a good supply of cool season flowers such as pansies, snapdragons and dianthus. Though better planted during the fall in our area, there is still time to enjoy some early color if they are purchased and planted promptly.

🌱 Last call for planting fruit trees! Most fruit trees such as pecans, plums, persimmons, figs, peaches and nectarines are shipped bare root and should be planted during the dormant season.

🌱 Apply a spray containing horticultural oil emulsion to dormant fruit trees and ornamental shrubs. Follow label directions carefully.

🌱 Hold off on fertilizing the lawn and ornamental plantings. It is still too early for an application of a nitrogen containing product.

🌱 Prepare for establishing spring flower beds. Have a soil test before adding any lime to the bed. Sometimes lime is needed, but an application should be made only if the need is revealed by the test.

Apply generous amounts of an organic amendment such as peat, compost, mushroom compost or manure. Till or spade to incorporate with the existing soil to a depth of 6 to 8 inches.

Allow the prepared bed to lie undisturbed for 3 to 4 weeks before planting. This provides time for some important biological activity to take place, and new plants are less likely to suffer from stem and root rots as a result.

Dan Mullins
Horticulture Agent

RECIPES

BROCCOLI WILD RICE SOUP

Ready in 30 minutes or less!

1 pkg. (6 oz.) chicken and wild rice mix
5 c. water
1 pkg. (10 oz.) frozen chopped broccoli, thawed
1 medium carrot, shredded
2 tsp. dried minced onion
1 can (10 3/4 oz.) condensed cream of chicken soup, undiluted
1 pkg. (8 oz.) cream cheese cubed
1/4 c. slivered almonds, optional

In a large saucepan, combined rice, contents of seasoning packet and water; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 10 minutes, stirring once. Stir in the broccoli, carrot and onion. Cover and simmer for 5 minutes. Stir in soup and cream cheese. Cook and stir until cheese is melted. Stir in almonds if

desired. Yield: 8 servings (about 2

quarts).

SPLENDID RASPBERRY
SPINACH SALAD

2 Tbsp. raspberry vinegar
2 Tbsp. raspberry jam
1/3 c. vegetable oil
8 c. spinach, rinsed, stemmed and torn
into pieces
3/4 c. coarsely chopped macadamia nuts
or toasted almond slices
1 c. fresh raspberries
3 kiwis, peeled and sliced

Dressing: Combine vinegar and jam in
blender or small bowl. Add oil in thin
stream, blending well.

Toss spinach with 1/2 of the nuts, 1/2 of
the raspberries, 1/2 of the kiwi's and the
dressing. Top with the remaining
ingredients (nuts, raspberries and kiwis.)
Serve immediately.

The use of trade names in this publication
is solely for the purpose of providing
specific information. It is not a guarantee,
warranty, or endorsement of the product
names and does not signify that they are
approved to the exclusion of others.

Sincerely,

Linda K. Bowman, R.D., L.D.
Extension Agent IV
Family & Consumer Sciences
Santa Rosa County

LKB:etc